

REMARKS

Claims 20-22, 24-28, and 30-51 remain pending in this application. Claims 20-27, 40-42 and 45-46 have been rejected under §102(b) as being anticipated by GB 1,211,849. Claims 28-39, 43, 44, and 47-51 have been rejected under §103(a) as obvious in light of GB '849 in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,437,904.

In light of the claim amendments presented above and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claim nos. 20-22, 24-28, and 30-51 are in condition for allowance and requests reconsideration of withdrawal of the pending rejections.

I. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Each of independent claims 20, 40, and 45 have been amended to recite, a method and apparatus for annealing and manufacturing billets including a billet of light metal or a light metal alloy and at least one metallic wire (or where one contact element material is an aluminum and an aluminum alloy), and at least one cold-processing means through which the billet is drawn, in the form of a drawing die.

As will be seen upon review of the GB '849 reference, it does not show all of the claimed features of the presently-amended independent claims, specifically, it only discloses a device for drying aluminum foils, not an annealing process for annealing metallic wires.

Further, the annealing apparatus according to the presently amended claims 20 and 40, respectively, comprise a cold-processing device having a drawing die. On the other hand, a cold-processing device having a drawing die is not disclosed in GB '849. Further, the other references of record do not show all of the features of the amended claims 20 and 40, respectively, and therefore the subject matter of those claims is considered patentable over all of the prior art of record.

The method according to amended claim 45 comprises the feature of "cold-forming of the wire by means of a cold-processing device having at least one drawing die". That feature is not disclosed in GB '849. Therefore, presently amended method claim 45 is considered patentable over GB '849, as well as over the other references of record.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

As discussed above in Section I, independent claims 20, 40 and 45 recite *inter alia* a method and apparatus for annealing and manufacturing billets including a billet of light metal or a light metal alloy (or a contact element material of aluminum and an aluminum alloy) in the form of at least one metallic wire wherein the material contact elements is adapted to the material of the billet such that substantially no material from the billet diffuses into the contact element, and further, a cold-processing device having a drawing die.

However, all features of the presently amended claims are not disclosed in GB '849 and MacCraven '904. More specifically, each of those documents fails to disclose an annealing apparatus having at least one cold-processing device with at least one drawing die. Therefore, each of the claims previously rejected under §103(a) but now currently amended is considered patentably distinct over the two cited references, in view of their dependency from independent claims for which, again, all of the claimed features are not found in the cited references.

Further, it is submitted that GB '849 actually leads away from the subject matter as presently claimed in the invention. That is, GB '849 primarily discloses a method and device for drying aluminum foil. However, with regard to foils, the use of a cold-processing device with at least one drawing die does not make any sense at all. Thus, GB '849 actually leads away from the subject matter as presently claimed.

Thus, none of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, are sufficient to set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness, because they totally fail to teach or suggest all of the claim limitations.

III. Conclusion

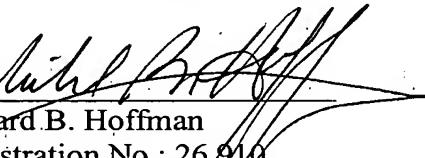
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the application as further amended is now condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Applicants believe no fees are required; however, should any fees be necessary, please Deposit Account No. 13-2855, under Order No. 30151/38183. Reconsideration of withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the foregoing, or any claim amendments deemed needed to result in allowance, it is requested that the Examiner kindly contact the undersigned by telephone at the number given below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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